



# NOVEMBER JOE

The Detective of the Woods  
by Hesketh Prichard.

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Continued

"Us?" I cried.  
"Naturally, I'm going."  
"But it is absurd! Your father would never allow it!"  
"He can't prevent it, dear James," she said softly. "I don't for a moment suppose that even the Kalmacks people would attack a woman. And father is all that I have in the world. I'm going."

"Then I suppose I shall have to go too. But tell me what purpose does your father think he will serve by undertaking this very risky expedition?"  
"He believes that the general feeling up at Kalmacks is in his favor, and the shooting of the warden as well as the writing of this letter is the work of a small band of individuals who wish to blackmail him. We will be quite a strong party, and he hopes to discover who is threatening him. By the way, didn't I hear from Sir Andrew McLerrick that you had been in the woods all these last falls with a wonderful guide who could read trails like Uca, the last of the Delawares, or one of those old trappers one reads of in Fenimore Cooper's novels?"  
"That's true."

"What is his name?"  
"November Joe," she repeated. "I visualize him at once. A wintry looking old man, with gray goatee and piercing eyes."

I burst out laughing. "It's extraordinary you should hit him off so well."  
"He must come too," she commanded.

On Friday I got Joe, who arranged to meet us at Primville, the nearest point on the railway to those mountains in the heart of which the estate of Kalmacks was situated. I myself arranged to accompany the Petershams.

Into the story of our journey to Primville I need not go, but will pick up the sequence of events at the moment of our arrival at that enterprising town, when Linda, looking from the car window, suddenly exclaimed: "Look at that magnificent young man!"

"Which one?" I asked innocently as I caught sight of November's tall figure awaiting us.

"How many men in sight answer my description?" she retorted. "Of course I mean the woodsman. Why, he's coming this way. I must speak to him."

Before I could answer she had jumped lightly to the platform and, turning to Joe with a childlike expression in her blue eyes, said:

"Oh, can you tell me how many minutes this train stops here?"

"It doesn't generally stop here at all, but they flagged her because they're expecting passengers. Can I help you any, miss?"

"It's very kind of you."  
"At this moment I appeared from the car."  
"Hello, Joe!" said I. "How are things?"

"All right, Mr. Quaritch. There's two slick backboards with a pair of horses to each waiting and a wagonette fit for the king of Russia. The road between this and the mountains is flooded by beaver working in a backwater 'bout ten miles out. They say we can drive through all right. Miss Petersham needn't fear getting too wet."

"How do you know my name?" exclaimed Linda.

"I heard you described, miss," replied Joe gravely.

Linda looked at me.  
"Good for the old mossback!" said I. Her lips bent into a sudden smile. "You must be Mr. November Joe. I have heard so much of you from Mr. Quaritch."

We went out and loaded our baggage upon the waiting backboards. One of these was driven by a small, saw-toothed man, who turned out to be the second game warden, Puttick. Mr. Petersham asked how Bill Worke, the wounded man, was progressing.

"He's coming along pretty tidy, Mr. Petersham, but he'll carry a stiff leg with him all his life."

"I'm sorry for that. I suppose you have found out nothing further as to the identity of the man who fired the shot?"

"Nothing," said Puttick. "and not likely to. They're all banded together up there."

On which cheerful information our little caravan started. At Linda's wish Joe took the place of the driver of Mr. Petersham's light imported wagonette, and as we went along she gave him a very clear story of the sequence of events, to all of which he listened with the characteristic series of "Well, now!" and "You don't say!" with which he was in the habit of punctuating the remarks of a lady. He said them, as usual, in a voice which not only emphasized the facts at exactly the right places, but also lent an air of subtle compliment to the eloquence of the narrator.

When we stopped near a patch of pine trees to partake of an impromptu lunch it was his quick hands that prepared the campfire and his skilled as that fashioned the rude but comfortable seats. It was he also who disappeared for a moment to return with three half pound trout that he had taken by some swift process of his own from the brook, of which we only heard the murmur. And for all these things he received an amount of open admiration from Linda's blue eyes which seemed to me almost exaggerated.

"I think your November Joe is a perfect dear," she confided to me.  
"If you really think that," said I, "have mercy on him! You do not want to add his scalp to all the others."

"Many of the others are bald," said she. "His hair would furnish a dozen of them!"

## CHAPTER XIV.

Men of the Mountains.

So the afternoon passed away, and as it became late we entered great tracts of gloomy pine woods. A wind which had risen with the evening moaned through their tops and flung the dark waters of innumerable little lakes against their moss bordered shores.

I noticed that Puttick unslung his rifle and laid it among the packs upon the backboard beside him, and whenever the road dipped to a more than usually somber defile his eyes, quick and restless as those of some forest animal, darted and peered into the shadows. The light of the sun was fading when there occurred the one incident of our journey. It was not of real importance, but I think it made an impression on all of us. The road along which we were driving came suddenly out into an open space, and here in front of a shack of the roughest description a man was engaged in cutting logs. As we passed he glanced up at us, and his face was like that of some medieval prisoner—a tangle of wild hair, a mass of grayish hair and among it all a pair of eyes which seemed to glare forth hatred. There was something ominous about the wolfish face.

It was already dark when we arrived at the house, a long, low building of surprising spaciousness, set literally among the pines, the fragrant branches of which tapped and rustled upon the windows.

We went in, and while dinner was preparing Mr. Petersham, Joe and I went to the room where the wounded game warden, Worke, lay upon a bed smoking a pipe with a candle sputtering on a chair beside him.

"Yes, Mr. Petersham," said he in answer to a question. "When you were away last fall I did think things were settling down a bit, but a week ago while Puttick was on the eastern boundary I thought I'd go up to Senlis lake, where last year Keogh had been brook netted. I was making a fire to boil my kettle when a shot was fired from the rocks up above, and the next I knew was that I was hit pretty bad through the knee."

"It was coming on dark, and I rolled into a bush for cover, but whoever it were didn't fire at me again. I don't think he wanted to kill me. If he had he could have put the bullet into my heart just as easy as in my leg. I tied up the wound the best way I could."

Lucky the bullet hadn't touched any big artery. Next morning I crawled up the hill and lit signal smokes till Puttick came. He brought me in here."

"I suppose Puttick had a look round for the tracks of the fella who gunned you?" asked November.

"He did, but he didn't find out nothing. There was a light shower between dark and dawn, and the ground on the hill above there is mostly rock." "Such, then, was the story of our coming to Kalmacks, and for the next two or three days we spent our time fishing in the streams, the only move in the direction of the main object of our visit being that Joe, whom Linda insisted upon accompanying, walked over to Senlis lake and had a look at the scene of Worke's accident. The old tracks, of course, were long since washed away, and I thought, with the others, that Joe's visit had been fruitless until he showed me the shell of an exploded cartridge.

"The bullet which went through Bill Worke's leg came out of that. I found it on the hill above. It's a 45.75 central fire rifle, an old '76 model."

"This is a great discovery you and Miss Petersham have made," Joe smiled. "There's nothing much to it, anyway. She lost her brooch somewhere by the lake and was looking for it when I found this." Joe indicated the exploded shell. "The mountains are full of 45.75 guns, 1876 pattern. Some years back a big iron-mongery store down here went bust and threw a fine stock of them caliber rifles on the market. A few dollars would buy one, so there's one in pretty high every house and two, and three in some. However, it may be useful to know that him that shot Bill Worke carried that kind of a rifle. Still, we'd best keep it to ourselves. Mr. Quaritch."

"All right," said I. "By the way, Joe, there's a side to the situation I don't understand. We've been here four days, and nothing has happened. I mean Mr. Petersham has had no word of where to put the \$5,000 blackmail these criminals are demanding of him."

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His Face Was Like That of Some Medieval Prisoner.

"Maybe there's a reason for that." "I can't think of any." "What about the sand?" "The sand?" I repeated. "Yes, haven't you noticed? I got Mr. Petersham to have two loads of sand brought up from the lake and laid all round the house. It takes a track wonderful. I guess it's pretty near impossible to come nigh the house without leaving a clear trail. But the first rainy night, I mean when there's rain enough to wash out tracks." "They'll come?" "Yes, they'll come."

## To Be Continued.

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### BLOW UP OIL SAFE FOR \$200

Burglars Wait for Passing Train to Deaden Sound

Reading, Pa., Nov. 24.—Early yesterday burglars gained entrance to the offices of the Crew-Levick Oil Company, in West Reading, blew open the safe with nitroglycerin and got away with almost \$200, leaving behind a lot of drills and other tools. To deaden the sound the safe was covered with wet horse blankets, and these and a freight train passing nearby, made their work practically safe.

County Detective Straub and the city police are investigating. A series of safe-blowings has prevailed throughout this city and county.

### PIGEONS HIS PREFERRED LOOT

Eighteen Times in Jail for Stealing Them, Though Cheap

Sunbury, Pa., Nov. 24.—Michael Pock, of Shamokin, yesterday pleaded guilty to stealing a 25-cent pigeon and was sentenced to serve 18 months in the Northumberland county jail. He remarked that he usually made \$2 a day when he worked, and that the 18 months' sentence would mean at least \$300.

Pock has been in jail 18 times, and every time he was committed for pigeon stealing.

### Fatal Accident at Mine

Mount Carmel, Pa., Nov. 24.—The Mount Carmel, operated by the Lehigh Valley Coal Company, was the scene of a fatal accident yesterday when both ribs of a gangway caved in and caught James Robins and James Davis, miners of this place. Robins was dead by suffocation, while Davis was fatally injured when found several hours later by a rescuing party.

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GUN AIM ASSURES NUPTIALS

Then Celebrants Get So Happy That One Is Shot

Pottsville, Pa., Nov. 24.—Jacob Mullock, of Mt. Pleasant, who was to wed Miss Ollie Shattuck, of Allentown, at Buck Run, a mining village near Minersville, yesterday morning, suddenly left the place, leaving Miss Sheritan weeping before the altar of the Little Church, where the ceremony was to take place.

Indignant friends went after Mullock and located him at Mahanoy Plane. He refused to come back until forced to do so at the point of a revolver.

The ceremony was then performed, and the population at Buck Run celebrated the event so boisterously last evening that one of the guests, Daniel Necker, was shot in the right arm.

Women Save a Town

Sunbury, Pa., Nov. 24.—A forest fire that raged 14 hours threatened the town of Fisher's Ferry, near here, yesterday. Harry Olmstead's barn was burned, Mrs. Olmstead saving the horses by throwing her apron over their heads and leading them out. When the men became exhausted the women jumped in and fought the flames, keeping them from the houses.

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